



YOUNG CANADA'S

REPLY TO

“ANNEXATION”

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Queen's University at Kingston

PATRIOTIC SPEECH

BY

DR. W. GEORGE BEERS.

At the banquet of the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th Districts Dental Societies of the State of New York, held in Syracuse on the 25th October, 1888, when 250 members from all parts of the state attended, including many ladies, several judges and clergymen. Drs. Willmott, Cæsar, Roberts and Snelgrove, of Toronto, and Dr. Beers, of Montreal, were present. In reply to the strangely worded toast, "Professional Annexation," Dr. Beers spoke as follows:—

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—

I must confess to a good deal of embarrassment in replying to a toast which is intended to be both professional and political, but I have been specially asked to do so by the Chairman, and if I should offend anyone, as I must say exactly what I think, I can only offer to settle on the spot by inviting you, as the boys say, "Come out in the alley!" I have neither the presumption nor the vanity to imagine that I am able to do justice to the personal and professional courtesies which Doctor Jonathan has always bestowed upon his Canadian friends, as well as to the magnificent ignorance—sometimes ill-nature—which Senator Jonathan has recently lavished upon his Canadian foes. But I can assure you that not even the professional liars who supply the *New York Herald* with Canadian news, or the wily politicians who eat forked lightning for breakfast and dynamite for dinner; not even the insane malice of men who hate Canada, as they may hate Cyprus, because it belongs to Britain; not even this can lessen the admiration Canadians have for the many noble and generous

traits of character which belong to their American cousins. I am sure I speak, too, for my brethren from loyal Toronto, when I say that we have too often been under deep professional obligations to the kind nature of the cousin we still, from custom, call "brother," not to know, that, however we differ politically, you

RESPECT OUR NATIONAL CONVICTIONS

as you wish your own respected ; and that as you choose to hit at us hard, you have enough of English fair play to take a drubbing back, and to allow the possibility of Canadians loving and defending the fame and good name of the Dominion, quite as much as you love and defend that of your Republic. No one more than loyal Americans would despise the poltroon who carries his patriotism in his pocket ; the disloyalty of the political parasite who would make patriotism a house of cards, and dollars the chief end of a people ; intriguers who hiss out secession or annexation when they fail to get their political crimes or crotchets enshrined ; men whose hunger for notoriety and power is a fever of their existence. I am sure that you could have nothing but contempt for any free people who measure their allegiance purely by commercial standards, and who, fearing to face the difficulties which meet every nation, turn peddlers instead of protectors of their national birthright. Just as you had and have your croakers and cowards, we have ours, but, Mr. Chairman, Canada, is not for sale ! There have been prophets like Goldwin Smith since the days of Elizabeth who have predicted England's decline within their time, but all the colonial greatness of England has been developed since the time of Elizabeth. We have, as you have, bitter partisans in the press and in politics, who delight to foul their own nest, who revel in the rain that destroys the crops, and who sincerely believe they can change the climate if they could change the Government. We have a few of those wiseacres of society who assume to possess a monopoly of foresight, and who, like Caius Caligula, think the world would have been better made could they have been consulted. But these people no more represent the convictions of Canadians than O'Donovan Rossa or your fire-eating politicians and papers represent those of true Americans. I have no desire to hurt anybody's feelings here, but

I hope I may be allowed to say something to remove the infatuation too prevalent in the States that

CANADA FAVORS ANNEXATION.

Were we to judge you as you judge us—by the vamping of the croakers, what value could we put upon your union, and would we not feel like agreeing with Rossiter Johnson, who in his "Short History of the War of Secession," just published in Boston, thinks he sees in certain national circumstances the threatening elements of a second civil war? For years before the last civil war you had fire-eaters whose arrogance and vanity knew no bounds; who were advised by the Canadian press to study the elements of discord in the South instead of hankering for new ones in the North. It was just the same when years before that, Georgia and Carolina appealed to arms and defied the general Government. Surely two threatened disruptions and one terrible war in the history of a century should be enough. But last fourth of July I was near enough the "Re union of the North and South" on the battlefield of Gettysburg, to see the ex-Confederates wearing the starred and barred badge, with the inscription upon it. That was the flag of treason and rebellion in 1861, and it is the flag of treason and rebellion in 1888. I read the protests of General Wagner, General Gobin and the Quartermaster-General of the Grand Army of the Republic against the gush of glorification of rebels because they had been rebels. I heard one officer boast that Southern privateers had destroyed \$400,000,000 of your property, and had driven a quarter of a million tons of your shipping to make transfer to the British flag. I heard another gloat over the fact that they had nearly captured Philadelphia. I heard scores declare that they had not been beaten but starved. Reflecting upon all this, and hearing at this very hour the discordant echoes from that quarter, it strikes me that if Senators like Mr. Blaine are sincere in their effusive professions of patriotism, they could find a good deal to monopolize their genius down there in Dixie without meddling in the politics or the future of Canada. Canada minds its own business, and does not worry itself over yours, though you have coddled and dry-nursed her enemies, and when she was at peace with

you, allowed a horde of your citizens to invade her. Frankly, I may say that while I believe Canada

HAS BEEN A FAIR NEIGHBOR,

too often she has not found her cousin one. If for once in the Treaty of Washington, remembering Maine, Oregon and San Juan, she did not let your diplomatists get the better of her, she felt that she had given you at least a reasonable *quid pro quo*. During the civil war we allowed your armed troops to cross from Detroit to Niagara on Canadian territory on the Great Western railway; but during the Red River rebellion of 1869, your Government refused leave to one of our vessels to go up the Sault Ste. Marie canal, and arms and ammunition were transhipped at considerable delay. When the St. Albans raiders, unknown to us, entered your territory from Canada, your Government was asked for its bill of damages and it was paid. When the Alabama claims bill was presented, it was paid so well that, years after every possible claim was settled, your Government retains a large balance which should have been refunded to Britain! What about the damages done to Canada in Canada by your citizens during the Fenian raids, most of them wearing the uniform of branches of your national troops? Not a cent has been paid. You expected Canada to know that a few quiet and straggling Southerners intended to raid St. Albans; you thought that England should have known that a solitary cruizer intended leaving one of her ports to prey upon your commerce. But what a splendid display of reciprocal consistency, that thousands of armed men should openly muster and drill in your chief cities for months; openly occupy your border towns and villages, and attempt to invade us, and your Government comparatively oblivious! In the face of these facts, it is not easy to swallow the statements, or believe in the honesty of public men who talk of the exactions and encroachments of a people of 6,000,000 upon a people of 60,000,000.

CANADA CANNOT BE COERCED

or forced into union with such example of political hypocrisy. There was a time, twenty years ago, when we were disconnected provinces; when Canada proper contained only 370,488 square

miles; when we had few railways, when stagnation seemed to mark us; when we had no winter outlet of our own to the sea; when our great North-West was a great unknown. Even then annexation was unpopular. There had not been enough accomplished then by Canadian statesmen to make their rivals envious, and your own statesmen did not dream that we could build a railway to connect the Maritime and the older provinces; or that with a population of only 6,000,000, we would dare to span the continent with another, a work not accomplished by the States until they had 50,000,000. But can you be deceived into the belief that confederated Canada is now "for sale," when since Confederation twenty years ago, our revenue or consolidated fund has immensely increased; when our shipping and its tonnage has more than doubled—young Canada standing fifth on the list of nations; having more vessels than old France, Spain, Italy or Russia; when the assets of our chartered banks, the value of our imports, the extent of our exports tell a story of our marvellous progress; when, instead of about 2,000 miles of railway in 1867, we have now 14,000, giving us a greater length of mileage than any other part of the Empire, excepting the United Kingdom and India; when the Canadian Pacific railway has established a line of steamers between Vancouver and Hong Kong and Japan, and our great Canadian line has become of Imperial importance; when we have developed our inexhaustible fisheries, thanks to your abrogation of the Reciprocity Treaty, so that we have 75,000 hardy men sailing our vessels and otherwise engaged in the business, and for 1887 we value these fisheries at \$20,000,000! Can you wonder that annexation, as a serious subject, has received its doom, and that in spite of the intoxication of senatorial conceit on the one side, and the croaking of malcontents and political tramps on the other, Canada is loyal to the Mother Country, from whose stout old loins both of us sprang? Confederated Canada, respected Canada, loyal Canada, progressive Canada is a personal and political insult to the sore-head parties who opposed Confederation, and who would welcome

ANNEXATION TO TURKEY OR RUSSIA

were we neighbors, or rejoice even at annihilation rather than

live the agonizing life of seeing their prospects and prediction destroyed. There were millions of your own citizens glad to do their worst to dismember your union; there were thousands who gave their lives to wreck the Republic that their own State interests might be promoted. Yet when a few obscure cranks in Canada declare in favor of annexation, you think they speak the sentiment of a sober people who do not find it necessary to indulge in the spectacular or the rhetorical that you may see and hear the truth. You choose to ignore the treason of many a Southern newspaper to-day as you did twenty-five years ago, and you exalt as gospel the partisans of the Canadian press, who are incapable of telling the truth.

Personally and professionally, I am sure any dentist who visits you forgets he is not an American, and I am sure we try to make Americans coming to Canada forget they are not Canadians. You have big and hospital hearts that were intended for hospitality and not for quarrel. Personally and even commercially we can find so many points of common agreement that should overlook the few where we must agree to differ. Politically, I realize I am a foreigner here the moment I cross the line. I am at home when I land at Liverpool, at Glasgow, at Dublin, at Bermuda, New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, New Guinea, Jamaica, Barbadoes or Trinidad. Politically I have a share in, and am proud of, the glorions old flag which waves over New Zealand, Australia, Gibraltar, Malta, Hong Kong, West Africa, Ceylon, St. Helena, Natal, British Honduras, Dominica, the Bahamas, Grenada, Barbadoes, India. England is an old and apt master in annexation. Since she lost the thirteen colonies here, she has annexed colonies far greater in area and population, of far more value to her than if they were joined to her three kingdoms, while Spain, Portugal, Holland and France have lost theirs, and there is little or nothing left for any other nation to annex. I need no other political passport to the rights of a British subject, and the citizen of a great realm, comprising 65 territories and islands, than my Canadian birthright. I do not measure my national boundary from the Atlantic to the Pacific, but from the Pacific to the Caribbean Sea.

UNDER THE REIGN OF VICTORIA

no Canadian need be ashamed to belong to an Empire which embraces a fifth of the habitable globe, and to know that his own Dominion forms nearly a fifth of the whole; an Empire five times as large as that which was under Darius; four times the size of that under ancient Rome; sixteen times greater than France; forty times greater than United Germany; three times larger than the United States, Australia alone nearly as big as the States; India nearly a million and a quarter of square miles; Canada, 600,000 square miles larger than the States, without Alaska; and 18,000 square miles larger with it! An Empire nearly 9,000,000 of square miles, with a population of 310,000,000. Sharers in such a realm; heirs to such vast and varied privileges, "Canadians are not for sale." Political annexation must then remain a bug-a-boo for disappointed politicians on our side to play with, and a bubble for certain Senators on this side to blow to decoy their innocent fanatics at home. But there is an annexation we favor, that of brotherly friendship and political good-will. You have 54,000,000 the start of us. Are you the Goliath, afraid of Canada as a political David? Canada has been a good neighbor. When Lincoln and Garfield died the Dominion was in mourning. Whenever any of your men-of-war come into our ports, the citizens rejoice and give their men the hospitalities of the cities. There are constant reciprocity treaties being made every day in the year between us at the altar of Hymen. At many of our banquets the toast of the President follows that to the Queen. At most of our public gatherings your flag entwines ours. From most of our pulpits prayers are offered for your ruler as well as for ours. That is the sort of alliance that we do more than you do to promote. We want, too, fair commercial reciprocity, but we shall not take commercial union for it, or bend our necks or our knees for either. Whatever betides, we can both be loyal to our own political convictions, we can both be fair, even to our own national and natural prejudices, and while Canadians may neighborly pray "God bless the Republic," may you not in as friendly a spirit reciprocate with "God Save the Queen."



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